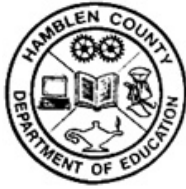


Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



Alpha Intermediate School
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Morristown TN 37814
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www.hcboe.net/Main/School/AI/aiindex.html



Alpha Intermediate Implements Waste Reduction

The Member

Alpha Intermediate School, with a staff of 40, serves 354 students in grades 3-5. The school's emphases include academic excellence, service learning, parental involvement, and environmental stewardship. These areas complement the school's mission to produce responsible, successful members of society and the school's vision of "A World Class Education – Right Here at Home."

The Story

In 1994, students and staff moved into a new facility, after the school had been in existence for over 40 years elsewhere. A new building, campus, and administration brought a unique commitment to environmental concerns. We had been producing over 1500 gallons of weekly trash sent to the local landfill. Students and staff agreed to reduce paper, cans, and food waste through a comprehensive recycling and composting program.

The challenges we faced included funding and building composting bins, educating students and staff about composting and recycling, and obtaining receptacles and curb-side pick-up.

The Success

A local business partner donated materials and labor to construct compost bins. We are fortunate to have a 10-acre campus, which allows us to make and use compost in the gardens that have contributed to Alpha's award-winning "Love Our Earth" program. With the help of 4-H leaders, the local Keep America Beautiful chapter, and the city and county governments, Alpha is now set up for composting and recycling. Safety patrol members bring compostables from the cafeteria to the bins daily, and custodians maintain the piles.

Both sides of paper are used for school memos, newsletters, and hand-outs to reduce paper usage and save money. Our copy paper is supplied by students' families, and we request that recycled-content paper be purchased. Student helpers fill receptacles with recyclables from the classrooms on the county's "Blue Bag Pick Up Day." The Morristown *Citizen Tribune* provides a large bin for newspaper recycling

from the school and the local community, paying \$15/ton to the school. We recycle cardboard on "Boxing Day" when the county picks it up, which is usually once a year. Aluminum soft drink cans and large steel cans from the cafeteria food service are donated to the Humane Society for recycling (they keep the money for the care of animals). Some of the classes collect plastic six-pack rings from the community to be recycled through the county.



The Pollution Prevented

Alpha Intermediate has moved from zero recycling and composting to minimal waste. Approximately 85% of all food is composted and 90% of paper is recycled. We know that our families and community have reduced their waste production and increased recycling as well. The Love Our Earth beautification projects, such as the animal garden and butterfly garden, have brought us awards and grants that will continue to expand the program. We have also received awards and recognition for waste reduction from Eastman, TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation, and Ijams Nature Center. School principal, Dr. Julia Price, states "The Love Our Earth project is an essential part of our curriculum as students learn responsibility in the area of environmental stewardship. It is our belief that children are gifts we send to a time and place we will never see."

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